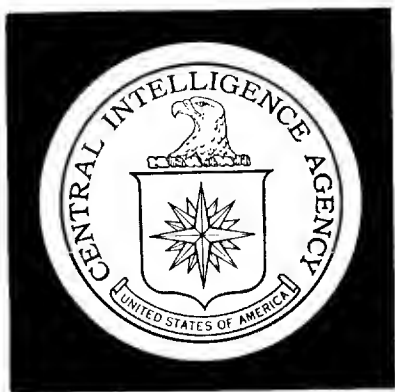


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Iran - Saudi Arabia: The Shah may commit Iran to
aid Faysal if Saudi Arabia is attacked.

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IRAN - SAUDI ARABIA: THE SHAH MAY COMMIT
IRAN TO AID KING FAYSAL IF SAUDI ARABIA IS ATTACKED.

THE SHAH SAID LAST SUNDAY THAT HE IS "VERY
CLOSE TO A COMMITMENT" TO COME TO THE SAUDI'S DE-
FENSE, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] HE ADDED THAT IRAN'S OWN SECURITY REQUIRE-
MENTS DEMANDED THAT HE RESPOND FAVORABLY TO FAYSAL'S
REQUEST FOR SUPPORT. THE SHAH HAS ASKED THE US TO
LEASE OR SELL HIM FOUR TANKER AIRCRAFT SO THAT
IRANIAN FIGHTERS OR GROUND SUPPORT CREWS WILL NOT
HAVE TO BE STATIONED IN SAUDI ARABIA.

SUCH A COMMITMENT TO SAUDI ARABIA WOULD BE,
FOR THE SHAH, A LOGICAL OUTGROWTH OF HIS OBSESSION
WITH THE FUTURE SECURITY OF THE PERSIAN GULF AND
OF HIS SPECIAL CONCERN ABOUT THE STABILITY OF THE
SAUDI MONARCHY. IN RECENT MONTHS, IRAN HAS ALSO
PROPOSED A MUTUAL DEFENSE ARRANGEMENT BETWEEN IRAN,
SAUDI ARABIA, AND OTHER MODERATE GULF STATES TO
KEEP OUT RADICAL ARAB AND SOVIET INFLUENCE AFTER
THE BRITISH WITHDRAW FROM THE AREA IN 1971.

IRANIAN OFFICIALS HAVE OFTEN EMPHASIZED THAT
THEIR COUNTRY MUST ASSUME MAJOR RESPONSIBILITY FOR
THE SECURITY OF THE GULF, AND THE SHAH MAY REGARD
A DEFENSE COMMITMENT TO FAYSAL AS AN OPPORTUNITY
TO REINFORCE IRAN'S PRIMACY IN THE AREA. THE SHAH
IS LIKELY TO BRING INCREASING PRESSURE ON THE US
TO PROVIDE HIM WITH THE MILITARY EQUIPMENT HE BE-
LIEVES NECESSARY FOR IRAN TO FILL ITS ROLE AS
"PROTECTOR" OF THE GULF. [REDACTED]

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